

March 8, 2010

U.S. Government and Blue Nile State Government Dedicate Granville-Abbas Girls' Secondary School, Kurmuk

Kurmuk, Blue Nile State – The U.S. Government, acting through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), today officially presented to the Blue Nile State Ministry of Education the new Granville-Abbas Girls' Secondary School in Kurmuk. The school is designed as a model of girls' education for the region.

The school is being dedicated on International Women's Day to highlight the importance of educating girls. As the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Vermeer has said, "When girls receive an education, the family and the community benefit."

The school, a multiple-building complex that includes three sets of classrooms, a library, theater, cafeteria, dormitories, and teachers' offices, will accommodate 120 female students. The Health, Education and Reconciliation Program (HEAR) Education Resource Center, a USAID-supported learning center attached to the school, provides students with Internet access and computer training and student-teacher resources. The school is part of the U.S. Government's effort, through USAID, to increase Sudan's capacity to provide quality primary and secondary education, especially for girls, who have lower literacy and lower rates of school attendance than boys.

The school was named in honor of John Granville, an American diplomat who worked for USAID in Sudan, and his Sudanese colleague Abdelrahman Abbas Rahama, who were both assassinated in Khartoum on January 1, 2008. The Granville-Abbas Girls' Secondary School serves as a testimony to their service and commitment to the people of Sudan.

The Blue Nile State government, embracing partnership with USAID in launching the school, has agreed to provide teacher salaries and cover other operating costs of the new facility. The U.S. Government has donated a set of "My Arabic Library," a collection of 80 American classroom titles translated into Arabic to help start the school's library collection.

Establishment of a girls' secondary school in Kurmuk addresses a critical gap in Sudan's educational infrastructure. Some Kurmuk residents who fled to Ethiopia during Sudan's civil war were able to receive some schooling at refugee camps. More often, they were unable to continue their studies after returning home, where the schools were reduced to rubble. The Granville-Abbas Girls' Secondary School now provides the opportunity for more girls to continue their education.

* For more information on developments related to the Granville-Abbas Girls' Secondary School, please contact gschool2010@gmail.com.

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